

THE ESQUIMALT LAGOON STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND STEWARDSHIP PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Initiative (ELSI) was initiated because of issues related to the environmental quality of Esquimalt Lagoon and coordination between the multiple levels of government involved in managing the area. Organizations with an interest in or jurisdiction over Esquimalt Lagoon, Coburg Peninsula and the surrounding lands met to discuss environmental issues, to explore opportunities for partnerships and to determine if a coordinated approach to the environmental management and stewardship of the area was needed. There was general agreement that a coordinated approach should be pursued and ELSI was formed as a result.

The ELSI Committee consists of representatives from participating agencies and stakeholder groups. These representatives have worked together to develop a common vision for the Esquimalt Lagoon and to identify goals that are designed to protect, enhance and restore the health of Esquimalt Lagoon. ELSI has developed a Stewardship Plan for Esquimalt Lagoon, which outlines specific actions designed to achieve ELSI's goals and provides a framework for a coordinated approach to environmental management in Esquimalt Lagoon. Subcommittees have been established within ELSI to facilitate the implementation of the Stewardship Plan and to coordinate project development and funding. ELSI is interested in working with other groups, First Nations and the community to implement appropriate aspects of the Stewardship Plan.

The purpose of this document is to state ELSI's vision and goals, define the committee's terms of reference, and outline the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Plan. It will remain relatively dynamic and will be updated with changes in membership and as the stewardship plan evolves. This document will be used to provide a framework for ELSI and to communicate this information to interested organizations and the community.

VISION

ELSI's vision is to protect, enhance and restore the health of the Esquimalt Lagoon for present and future generations of people, plants and animals.

GOALS

ELSI's goals are to:

1. promote and support Lagoon stewardship and the education of lagoon visitor's, residents and the surrounding community
2. prevent further loss or destruction of habitat and wildlife
3. reduce contaminant inputs to the lagoon
4. promote environmentally protective recreation uses in the lagoon area, and
5. promote environmentally protective land uses.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

These terms of reference define the purpose, role, geographic area, membership and the membership selection process, meeting schedule, and subcommittees of ELSI.

Purpose

The purpose of ELSI is to bring together organizations and individuals with an interest in or jurisdiction over Esquimalt Lagoon, Coburg Peninsula and the surrounding lands to

pursue a coordinated approach to the environmental management and stewardship of Esquimalt Lagoon.

Role

The main roles of ELSI are to:

1. provide a forum for the exchange and sharing of information regarding Esquimalt Lagoon
2. identify, in consultation with the appropriate agencies and stakeholders, common guidelines and policies for land use, maintenance and development and recreational land and water use, and recommend adoption or implementation of these guidelines and policies by the appropriate agency
3. conduct community education and outreach regarding the values of Esquimalt Lagoon and the associated environmental concerns, potential impacts and solutions
4. collaborate on environmental projects designed to protect, enhance and restore the health of Esquimalt Lagoon, and
5. pursue a common approach to the environmental management of the Esquimalt Lagoon and adjacent lands by landowner and regulatory agencies.

Geographic Area

The geographical focus of ELSI is the waters of Esquimalt Lagoon and the adjacent lands that fall within the boundary of the Esquimalt Lagoon Migratory Bird Sanctuary. ELSI is also interested in activities occurring within the Esquimalt Lagoon watershed that may have a negative impact on the health of the lagoon. ELSI will conduct outreach to the residents, businesses and institutions in communities within the Esquimalt Lagoon watershed.

Chair

ELSI will be coordinated, facilitated and chaired by the Victoria and Esquimalt Harbours Environmental Action Program (VEHEAP).

Meeting Schedule

The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 3:00 p.m. at a location selected and arranged for by the VEHEAP Coordinator.

Membership and Selection

ELSI Committee

The ELSI committee consists of representatives from the main jurisdiction and regulatory government agencies, First Nations, academic institutions, community and environmental organizations, the business community and citizens-at-large. Collectively, the representatives act as a community-based, multi-stakeholder body working to address environmental issues in Esquimalt Lagoon and its watershed.

ELSI membership may change with the agreement of the members and as dictated by the issues being addressed by the committee. Representatives will either be appointed by the appropriate agency or organization or a representative for a particular sector will be selected from applicants in response to advertising.

Representatives on the ELSI committee will be requested from and appointed by the following agencies and organizations:

Agency	# of Reps
Capital Regional District Parks	1
City of Colwood (council and staff)	3 (maximum)
Department of National Defence	1
District of Langford	1
Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service)	1
Esquimalt Lagoon Enhancement Association (ELEA)	2 (maximum)
Esquimalt Nation	1
Land and Water BC	1
Ministry of Water, Lands and Parks	1
Pacific Centre Family Services Association	1
Parks Canada	1
Royal Roads University	1
Songhees Nation	1
Victoria and Esquimalt Harbours Environmental Action Program (VEHEAP)	1
<i>Total Appointed Representatives</i>	<i>17</i>

Representatives from the following sectors will be selected from applicants responding to an advertising call who meet criteria for membership:

Sector	# of Reps
Citizens-at-Large	4 individuals
Business Community	2 individuals
Recreational User Groups	2 groups (1 rep. each)
Conservation/Environmental Groups (not including ELEA and VEHEAP)	4 groups (1 rep. each)
Academic, Scientific or Research Institutions	2 Institutions (1 rep. each)
<i>Total Sector Representatives</i>	<i>16</i>

Criteria for Membership for sector organizations:

- Citizens-at-large - representatives must live within the City of Colwood or District of Langford
- Business Community - representatives must be from a business operating within the City of Colwood or the District of Langford
- Recreational Users Groups - representatives must be from a group that uses Esquimalt Lagoon or Coburg Peninsula for recreational purposes
- Conservation/Environmental Groups - representatives should be from organizations whose:
 - geographic area of interest includes the Esquimalt Lagoon
 - mandate is consistent with the vision and purpose of ELSI

The term of office for sector organization will be two years. Members may be re-appointed for additional terms.

A selection committee made up of three representatives from the ELSI committee will review applicant's responding to advertising. Applicants will be chosen based the criteria for membership and the ability of the individual or organization to assist in the achievement of the goals and objectives of ELSI's Stewardship Plan. Deliberations of the selection committee will remain confidential.

ELSI Subcommittees

Within ELSI, there are three working subcommittees that facilitate the implementation of the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Plan and coordinate project development and funding. The following ELSI subcommittees are currently in place:

1. Restoration and Planning Subcommittee: This subcommittee will work in consultation with appropriate agencies, First Nations, landowners and the community to establish clear policies on jurisdiction and promote environmentally protective land use and restoration, maintenance and development practices that minimize potential impact to Esquimalt Lagoon.
2. Education and Outreach Subcommittee: This subcommittee will promote and support Lagoon stewardship through outreach and education of visitors to Esquimalt Lagoon and Coburg Peninsula, and to the residential, business, institutional and commerce sectors of the community within the Esquimalt Lagoon watershed. This subcommittee will coordinate and conduct all outreach required by ELSI and the other subcommittees.

Membership on the ELSI subcommittees is open to ELSI member organizations and the community at large. Where possible, subcommittee membership should include representatives from appropriate agencies and organizations as dictated by the issues being addressed. Strong involvement by citizens-at-large will be encouraged.

A representative from the ELSI committee will be asked to chair each subcommittee. Subcommittee chairs are responsible for working with the subcommittee to implement appropriate aspects of the Stewardship Plan, produce a record of decisions and action list for subcommittee meetings and provide an update on subcommittee activities at the regularly scheduled ELSI meetings.

For major decisions in the implementation of the subcommittee action plan, the subcommittee chair must make recommendations for action and implementation to the main ELSI committee for discussion and approval prior to proceeding.

ESQUIMALT LAGOON STEWARDSHIP PLAN

ELSI has developed the Esquimalt Lagoon Stewardship Plan (ELSP) which outlines specific actions designed to achieve ELSI's goals and provides a framework for a coordinated approach to environmental management in Esquimalt Lagoon. The ELSP is divided into three interrelated components:

1. Jurisdiction, Land Use and Development
2. Recreational Use
3. Education and Outreach

Within each component of the ELSP, the guiding principles, detailed action plan and parallel processes are identified. Parallel processes are scheduled or ongoing work conducted outside of ELSI by individual agencies. ELSI will attempt to coordinate with other agencies when appropriate.

It is expected that the ELSP will evolve and be revised as implementation progresses and as new issues, concerns and partnerships are identified. ELSI intends to work in consultation with appropriate agencies, First Nations landowners and the community throughout the implementation of the plan to achieve a coordinated approach to the environmental management of Esquimalt Lagoon.

Component 1: Jurisdiction, Land Use and Development Action Plan

- 1.1. Identify and clarify agency jurisdiction and associated responsibilities:
 - a) Identify agency mandate and outline specific responsibility with respect to Esquimalt Lagoon
 - b) compile applicable regulations, guidelines and bylaws
 - c) create maps that depict jurisdiction and ownership (land owners, Migratory Bird Sanctuary boundaries, current and historic land use, etc)
 - d) investigate a process for agency coordination for land and water use/development issues
 - e) develop a coordinated, long-term management solution for Esquimalt Lagoon in consultation with appropriate agencies and landowners
 - f) coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.2. Determine significant sources of contaminant inputs and investigate reduction solutions
 - a) Review previous contaminant sampling studies and compile sources of information
 - b) Identify information gaps and obtain additional information as required
 - c) Assess sampling data to determine potential sources of contamination
 - d) Investigates remediation and source control options for contaminants of concern
 - e) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.3. Identify, compile and map existing wildlife and habitat inventory data
 - a) Identify and compile existing information
 - b) Create maps that include the following:
 - i) Harbours Ecological Inventory information
 - ii) Natural Areas Atlas information
 - iii) Sensitive Ecosystem Initiative
 - iv) Forestry info (DND and VNHS)
 - v) Fisheries info

- vi) VEHEAP bird survey data
 - c) Identify gaps in the ecological information and determine methods of obtaining additional information if required
- 1.4. In consultation with landowners and managers, develop and encourage the adoption of land use guidelines and policies by appropriate agencies
- a) Identify existing regulations, bylaws and policies from all appropriate agencies
 - b) Determine gaps between agencies
 - c) Identify Best Management Practices (BMPs), guidelines and stewardship materials for land and water development, maintenance and use
 - d) Conduct consultation with additional agencies and public as required
 - e) Develop common policies and guidelines for land development, use and maintenance
 - f) Encourage the adoption and implementation by the appropriate agency (s)
- 1.5. Using available inventory and wildlife information, and in consultation with appropriate agencies, identify sensitive habitat and wildlife areas in and around Esquimalt Lagoon
- a) From available inventory and species information, determine sensitive areas that may benefit from spatial or temporal restricted access/use
 - b) Create maps of the sensitive wildlife and habitat areas that depict recommended spatial and temporal restrictions
 - c) Consult with appropriate agencies and public to determine possible ways to minimize human impact in these area
 - d) If deemed appropriate, recommend area of restriction/designation to appropriate agencies
 - e) Encourage adoption and enforcement by appropriate agencies
 - f) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with Outreach subcommittee
- 1.6. Conduct a groundwater study that deals with the quality and quantity of freshwater surface and groundwater inputs to Esquimalt lagoon
- a) examine current groundwater monitoring program, identify gaps and make recommendations for future groundwater monitoring
 - b) gather baseline information on annual flows from Colwood, Selleck and Bee creeks
 - c) determine quality of freshwater inputs to the lagoon
 - d) investigate potential impacts of future developments on quality and quantity of groundwater flows and the associated impacts on Esquimalt Lagoon

Component 2: Recreational Uses Action Plan

- 2.1. Gather data on human use and impacts through surveys of lagoon visitors and residents
- a) Survey visitors to the lagoon and residents living near the lagoon to determine current and historical uses, gauge community perception of problems facing the lagoon and the values of the lagoon and to obtain community input about what should occur at Esquimalt Lagoon
 - b) Obtain other available information on human uses and perceived problems (i.e. fire permits, number and nature of complaints to City Hall)
 - c) Assess the impact of human uses on the spit and the lagoon
 - d) Develop a recreation plan for the lagoon, in consultation with stakeholders, and recommend adoption and implementation by appropriate agencies
 - e) Coordinate outreach and education requirements with outreach subcommittee

- 2.2. Work with appropriate agencies and shoreline landowners to restore degraded areas
 - a) Identify the nature and extent of degraded area
 - b) Develop recommendations for restoration program (priorities, timelines and costs)
 - c) Conduct restoration activities in cooperation with appropriate agencies
- 2.3. Work cooperatively with the City of Colwood and other agencies to provide for appropriate human uses of the Coburg Peninsula
 - a) Develop a parking, pedestrian and traffic plan for Coburg Peninsula that limits parking to designated areas and controls the speed and volume of traffic in the area
 - b) Ensure the traffic plan includes a bike and pedestrian pathway which is safe and accessible by all population sectors (families, seniors, disabled)
 - c) Work to ensure plan includes the provision of adequate washrooms, garbage containers and doggie stations
- 2.4. Determine in consultation with appropriate agencies and stakeholders appropriate recreational land and water uses that will minimize conflict between recreational, wildlife and habitat values.
- 2.5. Develop policies or recommended guidelines governing human activities in and around the lagoon and encourage adoption by appropriate stakeholders

Component 3: Outreach and Education Action Plan

- 3.1. Develop a network of interpretive signs at Esquimalt Lagoon to educate visitors to the area about the historical and ecological values of the area and ways to minimize impact to those values
 - a) Examine requirements for access, wildlife viewing platforms, etc.
 - b) Work with First nations to develop specific components of interpretive stations to educate visitor about First Nations history, traditions and uses in Esquimalt lagoon area
 - c) Explore the role of volunteers and interpreters at the lagoon
 - d) Topics may include: natural history info, fisheries and wildlife habitat values, fragility and sensitivity and importance of lagoon ecosystems, Migratory bird sanctuary, First Nations values in the area
- 3.2. Conduct community outreach
 - a) Develop outreach materials for use at outreach events
 - b) Promote ELSI and the ongoing projects at appropriate outreach events and displays
 - c) Organize volunteers
 - d) conduct outreach and education as required by the other subcommittees
- 3.3. Develop and maintain ELSI web site
 - a) Provide ecological information about the lagoon and information about ELSI, jurisdiction, etc.
 - b) Provide links to ELSI member agencies
 - c) promote ELSI activities and events as required

- 3.4. Establish and provide ongoing monitoring of a Shorekeepers site in Esquimalt Lagoon
 - a) Establish a site
 - b) Conduct training for volunteers interested in assisting with the monitoring
 - c) Coordinate with RRU EMAN monitoring station
 - d) conduct annual monitoring of the site
- 3.5. Develop and implement a community driven contaminant monitoring program
 - a) Train community members to conduct sampling and record monitoring data
 - b) Obtain long-term data
 - c) Determine trends in data , try to determine solutions to reduce contaminant inputs
- 3.6. Coordinate annual shoreline cleanup in conjunction with the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup and Pitch-in Canada
- 3.7. Conduct watershed education using the interactive Esquimalt Lagoon Watershed model
 - a) Demonstrate the watershed model at outreach events and display
 - b) Demonstrate the model in the schools too
 - c) Explore feasibility of sponsorship program with local businesses in the community
 - d) Implement Opening Minds With Water program at schools within the Esquimalt Lagoon watershed